

Guiding Principles

❖ Benefits to Self and Society of Completing High School

- Self
 - A high school graduate in Arizona earns almost \$7,500 more each year than a high school dropout.ⁱ
 - High school dropouts age 25 and older reported being in worse health than adults who are not dropouts, regardless of income.ⁱⁱ
 - High school dropouts make up disproportionately higher percentages of the nation's institutionalized population.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Society^{iv}
 - Lost lifetime earnings for the 25,600 students in Arizona who did not graduate from high school in 2011 total \$3.1 billion.
 - Arizona could save as much as \$265 million in health care costs over the lifetimes of each class of dropouts had they earned their diplomas.
 - Arizona's economy could see a combination of crime-related savings and additional revenue of about \$184 million each year if the male high school graduation rate increased by just 5 percent.

❖ Adopted the National Dropout Prevention frameworks for guiding the work of the taskforce.

❖ Recommendations from the task force should align with at least one of the following four categories in which the Arizona Ready Council can make relevant recommendations to the Governor.

- Communications (i.e. Arizona Ready and other partners)
- Rules & Regulations (i.e. State Board of Education or ADE)
- Funding (i.e. state budget, grant procurement, or partnerships)
- Statutory (i.e. legislative change)

❖ Recommendations from the task force should focus on statewide frameworks and incentives for meeting statewide goals, and should avoid endorsing one particular program over another.

- Research shows that funding programs outside of community context is ineffective
- Recommendations need to be politically viable in a strong local control environment
- Recommendations should align with funding task force – looking at the “bigger picture” of overall incentives
- Recommendations should align with four state-wide mandates (Arizona's Common Core Standards, AZLearns, Move on When Reading, teacher evaluations) and support the overall need for an early warning system for students (including a data system and developmental assessments), interventions, and professional development.

Next Steps:

1. Conduct a budget analysis on each of the recommendations
2. Conduct research on success rates of CTE students – focusing on graduation rates
3. Conduct best practice research based on data analysis of successful counties and schools to generate additional recommendations
4. Conduct research on high school graduation of students outside of assigned cohorts (i.e. after the four year window after they enter 9th grade) to determine if additional metrics are needed

Graduation Rate Taskforce**Draft Recommendations for Discussion:****1) Early Childhood Recommendation****Build on and support key strategies from current collaborations for early childhood and early grade literacy to inform policy**

- a) Rationale: BUILD AZ, FTF, VSUW, ADE and Read On Arizona are working diligently in the area of early childhood development and early grade literacy
 - BUILD AZ is statewide partnership made up of business leaders, state agencies, and early childhood practitioners addressing early childhood systems, influencing policy and informing practice
 - Read On Arizona is a statewide partnership creating a framework around early literacy with a focus on school readiness, chronic absenteeism and summer learning loss.
 - First Things First and ADE are collaborating on developing a kindergarten developmental inventory.
- b) What GOEI or the Council can DO: (as individuals or as recommendations to the Governor)
 - (1) Include information in communication materials (i.e. Arizona Ready)
 - (2) Support development of the Kindergarten developmental inventory
 - (a) Ongoing costs (private funding already secured for development)
 - (b) Support adoption by SBE
 - (3) Support ADE early learning standards re-alignment with Arizona's Common Core Standards to include executive functions
 - (4) Support the longitudinal data system connection between DES, DHS and ADE/SAIS
 - (5) Family support for language acquisition, particularly language rich environments regardless of home language
 - (6) Consider supporting key strategies from BUILD AZ as they develop

c) Outstanding question/issues:

- Should reading endorsements be required for grades K-3? [Will follow up with Terri Clark]
 - Do reading endorsements make a difference in the classroom?
 - What keeps teachers from getting a reading endorsement? Money? Time? No requirement?

2) CTE and Academic Alignment Recommendation

Recognize that CTE provides the relevance needed for core subjects and should be positioned as an avenue for core subject credit in areas such as math, language arts and science

- a) Rationale: Students need to be engaged in activities that are relevant to future earnings earlier in their education than 10th grade
- b) What GOEI or the Council can DO: (as individuals or as recommendations to the Governor)
- (1) Ensure CTE course and pathways are aligned with college & career-ready expectations of the Arizona Common Core State Standards
 - (2) Recommend to the Governor as a budget priority
 - (3) Communicate with the State Board of Education and ADE to look at policies and processes to remove obstacles that prevent CTE courses being offered for core subject credit such as teacher certification
 - (4) Revise administrative code (R72-302 item f) to allow one credit of fine arts AND/OR vocational education, and other revisions as needed
 - (5) Work with ABOR to revise admission requirements to include Arts AND/OR CTE rather than Arts OR CTE
 - (6) Make quality CTE programs available to all students grades 9-12
 - (7) Articulate CTE programs through pathways to postsecondary education
 - (8) Support the opportunities for “team teaching” between academic and CTE teachers to allow for academic credit in CTE courses

3) Individualized Instruction Recommendation

Support funding (public or private) of the states’ CIS subscription for the ECAP system

- a) Rationale: Maxine Daly from ADE presented to the task force. She is currently evaluating the depth of implementation of ECAPs, and highlighted examples of ECAP planning being incorporated into academic class work. Arizona pays \$100,000 per year for the CIS subscription – she recommends funding it a different way because every year it is on the chopping block.

- b) What GOEI or the Council can DO: (as individuals, or as recommendations to the Governor)
 - (1) Create a funding consortium
 - (2) Recommend to the Governor as a budget priority
 - (3) Include ECAP information in communications about education (i.e. Arizona Ready)
- c) Outstanding question/issues:
 - How do we get Counselors more involved? Are there other things we need to do to help ADE with this work? How might the council or GOEI best support implementation of ECAP and/or use of CIS?
 - What are the results of ADE's survey on use of ECAPS?

4) Data System Recommendation

Support Early Warning Data system with links from High School districts/charters to elementary districts/charters and the early childhood data system early enough to plan interventions

- a) Rationale: Early intervention is key to getting students back on track for graduation. Middle school students who have multiple D's or failing grades, are chronically absent and have multiple behavioral incidents are 75% more likely to drop out of high school. Middle schools and high schools need information that shows the first signs that students are falling off track so they can intervene early. High school districts are frequently at a disadvantage in intervening early for their freshman class because they do not receive information on the incoming class with ample time to do sufficient planning.
- b) What GOEI or the Council can DO: (as individuals or as recommendations to the Governor)
 - Ensure the data system under development includes this element, and calculates absenteeism, course performance and support services in a manner that enhances transparency in these areas
 - Support/advocate efforts for K-8 districts to release holistic student information to high school districts early in the semester preceding freshman year
- c) Outstanding question/issues:
 - Understanding and overcoming barriers to sharing more comprehensive information earlier, including FERPA interpretations

5) Career Pathway Recommendation

Align CTE/Career pathway conversations from Arizona’s Skills Standards Commission and the Arizona Chamber of Commerce Skill Pathway workgroup and include ECAP development as a key tool to determine Industry Certification opportunities

- a) Rationale: The National Manufacturers Institute has developed a framework for developing an employer accepted industry certificate that the education community can implement, creating more relevance and a seamless pathway from education to career. The Arizona Chamber of Commerce has embarked on a workforce development project that links the ADE’s CTE department and the Arizona Skills Standards Commission with the Commerce Authorities “sector strategies” and the Chambers vision of “Southwest Direct.”
- b) What GOEI or the Council can DO: (as individuals or as recommendations to the Governor)
 - (1) Support programs of study that lead to High School Graduation AND industry certification
 - (2) Change State WIA Plan as it relates to Perkins Law to allow for AA degrees
 - (3) Engage in industry certification development as part of the Arizona Chamber of Commerce project

6) Mentoring Recommendation

Develop a plan to support districts/charters to put a lens on chronic absenteeism and develop more effective strategies

- a) Rationale: There is a direct correlation between academic performance and chronic absenteeism that persists from early grades through high school. Districts are required to monitor average daily attendance, but this metric can mask issues of chronic absenteeism. While districts have efforts to address truancy and/or chronic absenteeism, they are often punitive after the pattern has been established as opposed to being preventative at the first signs of developing patterns of chronic absenteeism
 - Read On Arizona, a statewide partnership focused on early grade literacy is working to recast strategies for increasing attendance to be more proactive at an earlier time – as early as kindergarten, sharing with parents and school officials the research on chronic absenteeism and early years, the definition of 10% absentee rate.
- b) What GOEI or the Council can DO: (as individuals or as recommendations to the Governor)
 - (1) Include information in communication materials (i.e. Arizona Ready)
 - (2) TBD based on outstanding question/issues
- c) Outstanding question/issues:
 - To what extent are districts tracking and addressing chronic absenteeism now

- What preventative and effective practices are in place in Arizona districts and in other states to address chronic absenteeism
- What would be the opportunities and unintended consequences of requiring a chronic absenteeism measure for all AZ schools or schools at identified performance levels

7) Informal Education Recommendation

Support development and adoption of Arizona Quality Standards for Afterschool Youth Development Programs

- Rationale: Afterschool youth development programs (AYD) play a key role in student/youth success. IN particular, they can play a strong role in combating a key cause of academic failure – summer learning loss. Educators (and community leaders) have become increasingly aware of the role that youth programs and community play in student/youth success, however often struggle with the question of how to determine the quality of these programs. Research shows that AYD programs build critical 21st century skills, increase student engagement which in turn increases academic success, and have opportunities to reinforce learning from the school day. There are numerous AYD programs in Arizona, but no commonly accepted standards of quality.
 - Valley of the Sun United Way, AzCASE, AZCAN, and Science Foundation Arizona are collaborating to develop quality standards for after school programs. These quality standards will serve as a rubric for entities looking to evaluate and improve the quality of their youth development programs, including schools looking to build supportive programs. There will be a core set of standards for all programs, but additional complementary sets of standards will be developed to address areas of focus such as STEM, college access, and summer programs.
- What GOEI or the Council can DO: (as individuals or as recommendations to the Governor)
 - (1) Support the statewide partnerships to develop quality standards for all youth development programs, as well as those with a specific focus on summer learning, STEM, college access, and others
 - (2) Adopt the quality standards and imbed them the work and partnerships of the Governor’s Office
 - (3) Partner with ADE, DHS and DES and the entities listed above to promote/support the adoption of standards throughout the state
 - (4) Include information in communication materials (i.e. Arizona Ready)
- Outstanding questions/issues
 - Licensing requirements for school age programs
 - Partnering licensing requirements with quality standards in a holistic framework

¹ <http://www.all4ed.org/files/Earnings.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Pleis, J.R., Ward, B.W., and Lucas, J.W. (2010). *Vital and Health Statistics: Summary Health Statistics for U.S. Adults: National Health Interview Survey, 2009*. Series 10: No. 249. Hyattsville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics.

ⁱⁱⁱ Approximately 40 percent of 16- through 24-year-olds in institutionalized group quarters were dropouts in 2009 based on data from the American Community Survey (ACS) (Aud et al. 2011, table A-20-3). The rate was approximately 8 percent for 16 through 24-year-olds in the civilian, noninstitutionalized population. Those in institutionalized group quarters include prison inmates as well as individuals in some mental health facilities and juvenile group quarter settings (U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, n.d.).

^{iv} Alliance for Excellent Education (Alliance), “The High Cost of High School Dropouts,” 2011